



The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program helps train people to be better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non-emergency projects that help improve the safety of the community. The CERT course is taught in the community by a trained team of first responders who have completed a CERT Train-the-Trainer course conducted by their state training office for emergency management, or FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI), located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. CERT training includes disaster preparedness, disaster fire suppression, basic disaster medical operations, and light search and rescue operations. Over the next two years, the CERT program aims to double the number of participants, with over 400,000 individuals completing the 20 plus hours of training. Train-the-Trainer sessions will be held in all 56 states and territories over the next year to expand the program throughout the United States.



The Fire Corps Program is a nationwide effort to bring citizens into local fire and emergency service departments to assist in non-operational roles, allowing firefighters and emergency medical responders to focus on critical, life-threatening situations. Through the use of citizen advocates, Fire Corps increases the capacity of volunteer, combination and career fire/EMS departments and creates a vital link between the fire and emergency services and citizens who want to make a difference in their community. Fire Corps offers numerous resources designed to assist departments in the implementation and maintenance of Fire Corps programs. Included in these resources are ideas for incorporating Fire Corps members into non-operational roles, tools enabling departments to retain and recruit citizen advocates, as well as access to a nationwide network of Fire Corps programs.



The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program coordinates the skills of practicing and retired physicians, nurses and other health professionals as well as other citizens interested in health issues, who are eager to volunteer to address their community's ongoing public health needs and to help their community during large-scale emergency situations. Local community leaders will develop their own Medical Reserve Corps Units and identify the duties of the MRC volunteers according to specific community needs. For example, MRC volunteers may deliver necessary public health services during a crisis, assist emergency response teams with patients, and provide care directly to those with less serious injuries and other health-related issues. MRC volunteers may also serve a vital role by assisting their communities with ongoing public health needs (e.g., immunizations, screenings, health and nutrition education, and volunteering in community health centers and local hospitals). Once established, how the local MRC Unit is utilized will be decided locally. The MRC unit will make decisions, with local officials, including the local Citizen Corps Council, on when the community Medical Reserve Corps is activated during a local emergency.



The VIPS Program provides support and resources for agencies interested in developing or enhancing a volunteer program and for citizens who wish to volunteer their time and skills with a law enforcement agency. The program's ultimate goal is to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) manages the VIPS Program in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice

To become a member, start a team or get answers to your questions contact Deb Watson, Indiana Department of Homeland Security at 317-233-5395 or via email at [dwatson@dhs.in.gov](mailto:dwatson@dhs.in.gov)